

# **CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VA - CITY FY 2006-2010 CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Consolidated Plan is a comprehensive planning document that identifies the housing and community development needs of the City of Alexandria's low- to middle-income, homeless and special needs populations, as well as of any target areas identified by the City, and outlines strategies for addressing the needs of these groups and/or designated areas over a five-year period. Preparation of a Consolidated Plan and the one-year updates to this document known as Action Plans are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a condition of the receipt of funding under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships (HOME), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Programs. Consistency with the Consolidated Plan is also required for public and private entities to be eligible to receive funding under a variety of other HUD programs.<sup>1</sup>

The Consolidated Plan approach is intended to encourage collaboration among all levels of government and between the public and private sectors (including for-profit and non-profit entities) in order to provide decent housing, establish and maintain a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities expanded within a jurisdiction, principally for low- and moderate- income persons.

This Consolidated Plan covers the period July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2010. The City has provided the required housing market analysis or inventory of facilities and services, needs assessment and strategic planning information under five general categories in Sections I through VI of this document: "Renters, Homebuyers and Homeowners;" "Homeless Persons and Those Threatened with Homelessness;" "Persons with Special Needs;" "Non-Housing Community Development;" and "Other Issues of Concern to HUD."

For each year covered by the Consolidated Plan, the City is required to prepare a One-Year Action Plan that describes the activities to be undertaken during that particular year to promote Consolidated Plan goals. As required by HUD, the City's Action Plan for the first year of the Consolidated Plan period is included in this Consolidated Plan and serves as the City's application for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2005 allocations of CDBG and HOME funds (see

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<sup>1</sup> While the City's Consolidated Plan includes needs assessment information and a description of goals for persons eligible for assistance under the federal Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs, because the City is not an entitlement grantee for these programs, it is not required to include ESG and HOPWA applications as part of the Plan. Funding utilized within the City under ESG comes through the state. HOPWA funds come through the District of Columbia and are allocated to local jurisdictions based on a locally-developed formula. For more information on the HOPWA funding process, see Section IV below.

Section VII). Information in the Action Plan section of this document has been grouped according to the following categories: “Housing Programs and Services to be Undertaken During City FY 2006;” “Non-Housing Community Development Programs and Services;” and “Other Activities to be Undertaken.”

It should be noted that the inclusion of data, information and cost estimates on the housing and community development needs of Alexandrians in either the Consolidated or Action Plans does not represent a commitment on the part of the City government to incur these costs or to address every need. Funding decisions will take into account both the availability of resources and the relative priority of any particular program, project or other request.

## ■ Consolidated Plan Development Process

***Citizen Participation Plan*** - HUD regulations require that the City establish a process for involving citizens in the planning and evaluation of programs covered by the Consolidated Plan. The City of Alexandria developed its current Citizen Participation Plan in 1995. The purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan is to ensure that Alexandria residents, particularly low-income persons and those living in any target areas identified by the City, have an understanding of their role in the development, implementation and assessment of housing and community development activities, and participate in the formulation of the Consolidated Plan, annual Action Plans, program amendments and the annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

The City notifies the public about pending actions related to the Consolidated Plan, annual Action Plans, CAPER or amendments to the Consolidated Plan through advertisements in English- and Spanish-language newspapers with general circulation in the City. The proposed plan, amendment(s) or evaluation report is distributed to the organizations, public agencies and other parties on the interested parties list maintained by the City’s Office of Housing and is made available for public review at Alexandria libraries and at the Office of Housing. In accordance with federal requirements, the City provides the required 30-day period of time for citizen comments to be received on the Consolidated Plan, Action Plans and amendments to programs funded through CDBG and HOME; the CAPER requires a 15-day public comment period.

HUD’s Consolidated Plan regulations require that the City conduct at least two public hearings per year at different stages of the program year to obtain citizen input. Together, the hearings must address the identification of housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities, and a review of program performance. The City fulfills this requirement by holding one hearing each fall prior to submission of the CAPER to HUD, and again in the spring when the draft Consolidated or Action Plan is made available for public comment. The fall hearing is conducted by City staff to allow citizen input on the City’s prior-year performance under the CDBG and HOME programs and to receive comments on current housing, homeless and community development needs. The second of the two annual public hearings is held in the spring before the Alexandria City Council at one of its regularly-scheduled monthly public hearings. This hearing allows for public comment on the draft Consolidated or Action Plan,

including the proposed activities for the upcoming grant year, prior to the Plan's finalization and submission to HUD.

The City provides no less than two weeks' notice to the public of the time, location and subject of these public hearings. As with other CDBG- and HOME-related notices, notices of the public hearings are published in three general-circulation newspapers in Alexandria, two of which are published in English and one that is published in Spanish. If the City anticipates that a significant number of non-English-speaking residents can be reasonably expected to attend a public hearing, translation services will be made available. Public hearings are held in City facilities that are fully accessible to persons with mobility impairments, and requests from persons with other special needs, such as sign language interpreting, are accommodated whenever possible with advance notice.

In developing the City FY 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan and the City FY 2006 Action Plan, the City sponsored a public hearing on housing and community development needs on September 20, 2004. The draft Consolidated Plan was made available for review for the HUD-required 30-day public comment period at: the Office of Housing in City Hall and at four public libraries beginning April 1, 2005; on the City's website beginning on April 4, 2005; and was mailed to approximately 150 interested parties. A second public hearing was conducted by the Alexandria City Council on April 16, 2005. The public comment period ended on May 4, 2005, and the City Council approved the Consolidated Plan on May 14, 2005. Citizen input on the City FY 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan and the City FY 2006 Action Plan is included in Appendix I of this document.

**Coordination with Public and Private Entities** - The Office of Housing is the lead agency in the development of the City's Consolidated Plan, Action Plans and CAPERs, and obtained information on relevant programs and services from a variety of public and private entities in Alexandria, including organizations serving special needs populations. To notify the state and surrounding jurisdictions about and to obtain input on the Consolidated Plan, the City provided copies of the draft Plan to relevant contacts in state agencies and in the local government agencies of adjacent counties.

Staff of the Office of Housing would like to express appreciation to the following public and private entities that contributed to the development of the City FY 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan and/or the related City FY 2006 Action Plan:

- Alexandria Economic Development Partnership;
- Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority;
- City of Alexandria Code Enforcement Bureau;
- City of Alexandria Fire Department;
- City of Alexandria Health Department;
- City of Alexandria Department of Human Services;
- City of Alexandria Department of Finance;
- City of Alexandria Office of Management and Budget;

- City of Alexandria Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse;
- City of Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning;
- City of Alexandria Police Department;
- City of Alexandria Department of Real Estate Assessments;
- City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities;
- City of Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services;
- City of Alexandria Office on Women; and
- the Homeless Services Coordinating Committee.

### ■ Income Groups Targeted by the Consolidated Plan

Consolidated Plan estimates of housing and community development need focus on persons falling within extremely low- to middle-income limits established by HUD. The income limits that apply to the City of Alexandria effective February 11, 2005 are provided in Table A below. These limits are updated by HUD each year. Beneficiaries of programs and services funded with HUD monies (including CDBG and HOME) must meet the most current applicable income limits at the time of service.

**TABLE A**

<b>2005 HUD Income Limits (Effective February 11, 2005)</b>								
<b>Income Category</b>	<b>Number of Persons</b>							
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
Extremely Low (HUD-adjusted 30% of median)	\$18,750	\$21,450	\$24,100	\$26,800	\$28,950	\$31,100	\$33,200	\$35,350
Low (Section 8 very low income limits; HUD-adjusted 50% of median)	\$31,250	\$35,700	\$40,200	\$44,650	\$48,200	\$51,800	\$55,350	\$58,950
Moderate (Section 8 low income limits) <sup>2</sup>	\$40,600	\$46,400	\$52,200	\$58,000	\$62,650	\$67,300	\$71,900	\$76,550
Middle (HUD Section 235 income limits)	\$48,200	\$55,100	\$62,000	\$68,900	\$74,400	\$79,900	\$85,400	\$90,900

\* 2005 Median Income, Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): **\$89,300**

<sup>2</sup> Moderate-income limits are capped at the national median income, which is currently \$58,000 for a family of four. HUD gave jurisdictions in the Washington Metropolitan area the option of increasing the eligibility limits for the CDBG and HOME programs to 80% of area median for a family of four. The City has chosen not to exercise this option in order to continue to target these programs to the households with the greatest need.

## ■ Geographic Area to be Served

Unless otherwise indicated, the geographic area to be served by activities undertaken in support of Consolidated Plan goals and objectives will be the entire City of Alexandria.

## Overview of City Policy on Housing and Community Development

The City of Alexandria is committed to promoting housing and community development opportunities and providing supportive services for low- and moderate-income households and persons with special needs. On September 14, 2004, City Council reaffirmed this commitment with its adoption of the City's 2004-2015 Strategic Plan, which included the following objectives of particular relevance to the City's low- and moderate-income and special needs populations that reflect housing and community development goals discussed in the Consolidated Plan:

- Goal: A caring community that is diverse and affordable
  - Objective: Increase the number and availability of affordable housing units with an emphasis on low- and moderate-income city workers, seniors, individuals with disabilities and others
  - Objective: Enable elderly residents to continue to reside in the City
  - Objective: Provide youth and adults with the opportunity to maximize their potential and live productive lives
  - Objective: Provide and fund appropriate types and levels of human and social services
- Goal: Quality development and redevelopment that is well planned and consistent with Alexandria's vision
  - Objective: Ensure that new residential development and redevelopment deliver mixed income housing units and provide accessible housing opportunities
- Goal: A strong local economy that is growing in varied small businesses and job opportunities
  - Objective: Increase job opportunities in Alexandria for persons at various income levels and abilities
  - Objective: Develop strategies to increase the employability of residents through skill and workforce development and supportive services

Decisions made by the City government about housing and community development initiatives generally take into consideration the following principles, which are intended to help manage the demand for assisted housing, health and human services:

- Self-Sufficiency - The City's strategy in providing assistance to families living at or below the poverty level is to provide education, job training, job placement and other supportive services to enable these households to improve their economic status.
- Homeownership - The Alexandria City Council approved the promotion of homeownership as a policy objective in October of 1994, citing it as a means to "build

stability in our population...make our diversity an asset...realize the benefits of public investment in our schools [and] our youth programs,...encourage more active involvement in commerce and civic affairs" and bring the percentage of owner-occupancy in line with that of other jurisdictions.